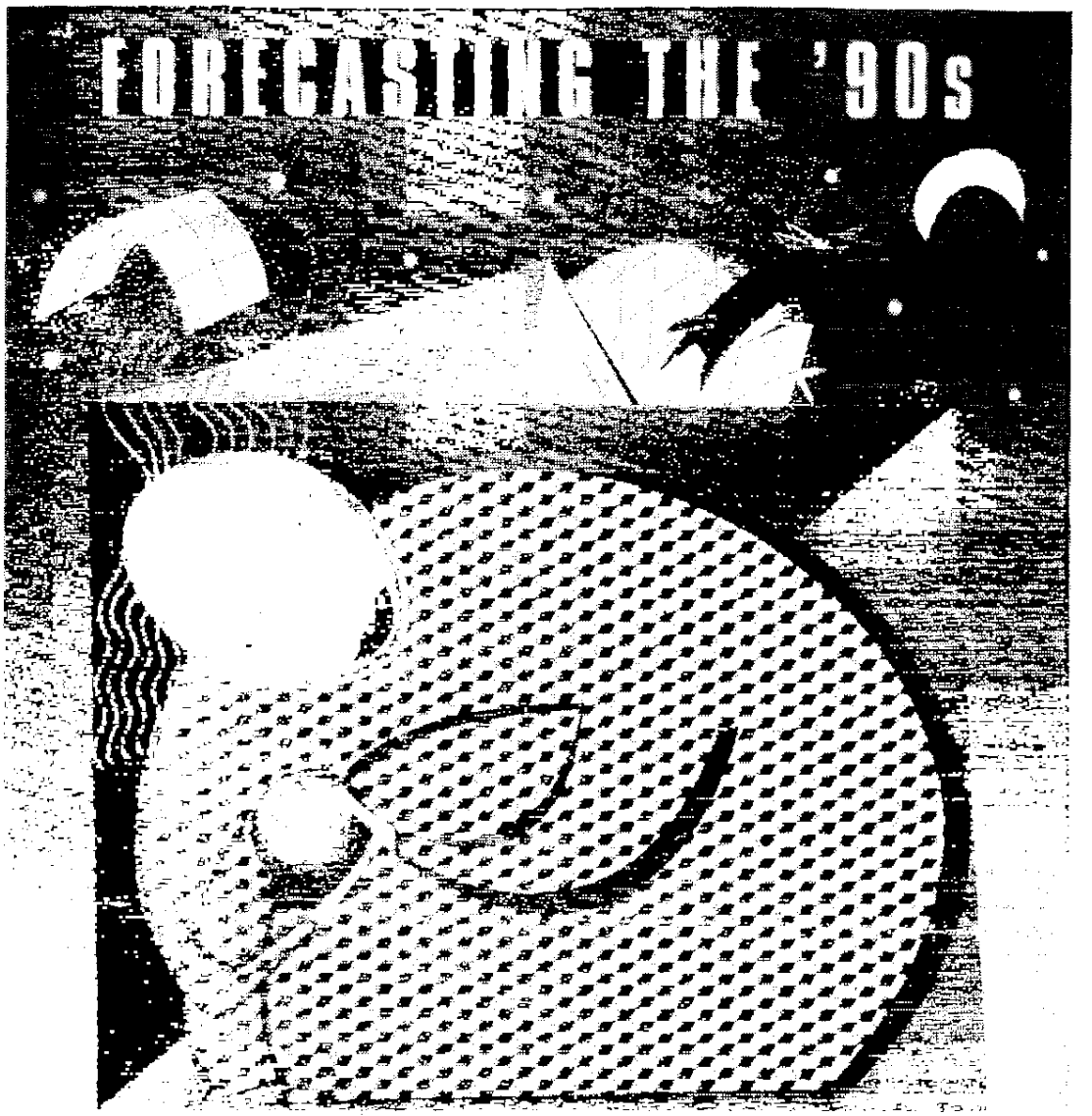
FROM: *Dallas Morning News*

FORECASTING THE '90s



There's an effort afoot to make the '90s the first truly responsible decade — the "Decency Decade" dedicated to environment, education and ethics.

Ms. Popcorn says her organization identifies trends by "brailling the culture" — a process that includes monitoring cultural signals such as magazines, newspapers, books, videos, movies, television, music, events and even fad foods.

"The consumer doesn't invent the future, but reacts to it," Ms. Popcorn says. "We talk to 3,000 consumers a year. We listen to children. We brainstorm and come up with ideas and patterns. We do a lot of hypothesizing."

Among Ms. Popcorn's provocative kernels of thought:

- Rap is the "cave painting" of the culture.
- MBAs will be replaced by MBSs (Master of the Business Soul).
- The hot master's degree, an M.A. in ecology.
- Employees have to forget about corporate loyalty.
- The new leadership will be more Will Rogers-ish.
- People are angry about crime and will demand their streets back. Non-violence will be a theme, from therapy to food.
- AIDS hastened cocooning; its cure could get people out again.
- People will shop for entertainment, but they will order necessities via computer.

New products and businesses will evolve from the trends, Ms. Popcorn says.

For example, androids will drive buses and "man" supermarket checkout counters. Reducing your own garbage will become big business with compost consultants, books, videos and equipment. A new consulting business — the "dream architects" — will help individuals identify and implement their dream life. Law clinics will emerge.

And when it comes to advertising, marketing and consumerism, the major hypothesis is clear: Hype is history.

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